

## Spring Goose Hunt

CDC, BOC Controversy



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photo: Patrick Forward

## The value of Goose Break

by Will Nicholls

It had been some time since I took a real Goose Break and it was hard to explain the importance of it to non-Crees. Even my wife looked at it as a vacation rather than what it really was and still is for any Cree. I think it is because many look at hunting as a sport in other cultures. That is not so for the Cree people.

It is a traditional pursuit that is rich in meaning for us. It means the long, lean winter months are coming to an end and springtime has arrived. It is the harbinger of times of plenty. The land is becoming fruitful and the geese are the first signs of that. It is such an important time and part of our lives that schools close down, and band offices and other organizations follow suit. In a community with almost 5,000 residents you are lucky to see 600 of them still roaming the streets.

Outside of Eeyou Istchee this would be unconceivable to see a town or city suddenly become almost deserted. The fast pace of life does not allow for this mass activity. In the past Canadian farming communities would see many kids let of school to join in the fall harvest, but that is no more. However, even that does not come close to what Goose Break means to the Crees of Eeyou Istchee.

I work mainly in the south, though with frequent trips back to the territory. For me, the Goose Hunt allows me to fully reconnect with what it means to be Cree.

I cannot do that down south as the culture is different and the relationships are not the same. I do not have the extended family support I grew up with that is still so much part of me.

When I arrived in Mistissini I had to get ready for the hunt. That involved winter clothing as snow and ice were still part of the landscape. Spring has to fight to make its presence known in Eeyou Istchee. I hadn't used the old pump-action 12-gauge in a couple of years so I had to clean it.

My brother had the gun-cleaning kit but it was locked away. My uncle Luke MacLeod said he was feeling a bit bored and to bring it over. I do a pretty good job of taking care of the gun, but Luke was awesome. I don't think it has ever been cleaned so well. That's family for you and the welcome I received at the blind by the other hunters was heartwarming and did much to bring me back to myself. Thanks to all and especially to Uncle Don's daughters for cleaning my geese.

Sharing and helping is part of the traditions that surround the spring Goose Hunt. It is also part of the Cree obligations as stewards and caretakers of Eeyou Istchee, the land and its inhabitants. We are part of the land that shaped us and the Goose Hunt reinforces what it means to be Cree.

And finally, I'm thankful to the nine geese that gave their lives to me.

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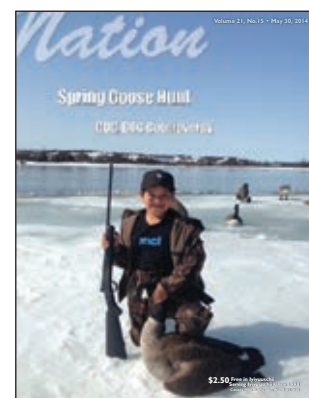
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Calvin "Jr" Blacksmith

photo by:  
Calvin Blacksmith



## Spring bounty

by Sonny Orr

Another roar around the big screen as the Habs score again, officially announcing the spring season with a sunny play-off forecast and a decent probability of a Stanley Cup. I was a few hundred metres from home as the cheers subsided, back from the goose blind in time to witness another goal while wolfing down a piece of fresh-cooked goose killed that morning. I shut down my Facebook for a while, as it was littered with hundreds of pro-Hab posts. I wondered if a lot of insurance brokers were a little jittery, but, no shops were looted or cars burned this time.

Meanwhile, grateful farmers graciously allow many early bird hunters to basically go nuts with guns to rid their fields of the pesky geese. The Cree hunters graciously comply, but a little thorn in some plans make some hunters think harder about being prepared. Like, for instance, where to clean the geese and do it inconspicuously. One chap I met talked about using an automatic plucker – wow, I think, technology at its finest. Facebooking further reveals that although it was a long way to travel for some succulent goose, everyone was happy no matter where the goose came from.

As the flocks gather and head north, nearly every community turns into a ghost town. A few weeks later, many darkened strangers reappear, only to turn out to be long lost family members returning from their Goose Break. However, for the people of the north, the geese are yet to arrive in abundance, as ice conditions and cold weather still prevail.

Arrggg!! My itchy trigger finger is acting up again. Only lead and cold hard steel is the cure for this ailment.

Armed with trusty shotguns, often with far too many shells, the hunter gets the much-needed raccoon tan and canned food cooked over a small fire. The blind is re-camouflaged, and the hunt is on! As time and the sun slips by slowly, the coveted waterfowl appear, honking their signature call. A shot rings out, then others and a proud grinning boy holds up his first goose kill. These days, young girls are just as eager to participate in the hunt. The other geese harvested are just as important, to be put away for a special occasion, like weddings, birthdays and walking-out ceremonies. The goose is a special food for our people.

Stories start up during the darkening hours in the snug little cabins throughout Eeyou Istchee, tales of past hunts and times that need to be remembered and passed on. Lessons and values, from an age before the Internet and even before the bush radio, are conveyed in stories. More often than not, the funny stories take over everyone's state of mind, then sleep comes easy. The sun rises a few hours later and the goose hunt tradition continues...

I, for one, appreciate the time taken to enjoy the great outdoors and to escape from the daily cycle of the rat race called civilization. Life on the land seems to be the way to go, at least until the incessant mosquito makes you change your mind and head back to town. Sometimes, I just don't want it to end, but hey, there's always fishing!

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# Water wars

## Flooding again drives residents from Kashechewan and Attawapiskat

by Amy German

After declaring a state of emergency on the weekend of May 10, all 2000 residents of Kashechewan were evacuated via military planes to nearby Ontario communities as sewage backed up into some 40 homes and damaged the local nursing station.

Then, less than a week later, a large-scale evacuation began for the community of Attawapiskat as leaders there declared a state of emergency due to flooding concerns, relocating almost 1000 people to communities across Ontario and Quebec.

Sadly, members of both communities are no strangers to the evacuation process as the same thing happened last spring when melting snow caused flooding and sewer backups. This has been the scenario now for several springs, in which homes and infrastructure are damaged in areas where both are already an issue.

Speaking to the Nation just prior to the state of emergency being declared in Attawapiskat, Timmins-James Bay MP Charlie Angus said it was no surprise that the community of Kashechewan had flooded again.

"Right now (May 16) the evacuation remains in place even though the water has started to recede. The problem is that the nurses' station has been badly contaminated with sewage and this is not the first time that this has happened. It's more like the third time. So we cannot move people back in without a proper nursing station," said Angus.

"I have spoken with the Minister of Health, asking her to make this a priority. My understanding is that this will be the first step because once we get that taken care of we can



Rising waters flood the streets in Kashechewan

start looking at the returning of the evacuees."

Angus said that while the community doesn't flood every year, it's more like every other year as it is simply a matter of ice blocking the wrong way and causing a flood.

The sewage backup also damaged 40 homes, the same 40 houses affected by floods last year.

"This is the endless cycle in Kashechewan. The dyke wall is aging and the government keeps putting money into it saying that the dyke will hold things back," explained Angus.

"But the problem is that even with the water not going over the dyke wall, which would be a catastrophe if it did, the backup of water and sewage into the houses has happened a number of times and has caused not only millions in damage but also trauma to the families who lose their possessions and have to deal with houses that then become contaminated with mould."

Angus said that this didn't have to happen as a deal had been made with the community in 2005 to move it to higher ground when Jim Prentice was the minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

According to Angus, the government walked out on that deal in 2007, despite a written commitment to invest \$200 million to reinforce a dyke and build better drainage systems to protect low-lying areas from spring flooding.

Seven years later the community is still being evacuated over flood concerns.

"You cannot protect a community on a flood plain against the Albany River with a dyke. It is not going to happen. This has been shown again and again. They fix it and then it floods. Every year they go back and tinker on it, but then there's the water pressure and the fact that the location is wrong," said Angus.



**Have a happy and safe Goose Break!**



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# UN foresees First Nations crisis

## Saganash reacts to the Anaya report

by Amy German

Last October, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples James Anaya visited Canada to see how its First Peoples were faring. Not well, it appears. His report released May 12 highlighted a looming “crisis.”

Citing the “jarring manifestation” of human rights problems that “have reached crisis proportions in many respects” when it came to Canada’s treatment of its Indigenous population, Anaya’s report highlighted a desperate socio-economic reality as well as the need for an inquiry into the “disturbing phenomenon” of missing and murdered women.

Romeo Saganash, the MP for Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou and the NDP’s deputy critic for Intergovernmental Aboriginal Affairs, wasn’t surprised by Anaya’s findings, as some of them were things his party has been saying for years.

“I’m glad that Mr. Anaya has joined the thousands and thousands of voices who have been calling for this inquiry. The NDP was the first party in Parliament to call for a national inquiry and we continue to press the government to do this,” said Saganash.

“It seems like the whole world, except for this Conservative government, understands that this national inquiry needs to happen, so I hope they will listen to the well-reasoned advice from experts like Mr. Anaya.”

The same day Saganash was answering questions on the Anaya Report, the RCMP released a report that detailed how between 1980-2013, 1181 Indigenous women went missing or were murdered. Saganash said he was hopeful that the impact of these two reports would sow a seed of change within the Conservative Party, but he wasn’t holding his breath.

Though the Conservatives have said they would much rather see an “evidence into action” approach, Saganash says the Tories are not putting their money where their mouths are.

“This government likes to talk about the things they are doing to address this problem, but the majority of their approach has been to cut and underfund First Nations police services and social services, while refusing to work together with Aboriginal groups on developing solutions. The Justice Minister can’t even provide a single explanation for why these disappearances are happening. So how can they honestly say they are solving a problem when they are refusing to investigate what the causes are?”

Much like Anaya’s recommendations, Saganash said the only way to move forward at this point would be to call for a national public inquiry because it is the only way to find answers and to bring closure and healing to the families and communities.

“This government needs to change its approach of confrontation and start to work with Indigenous governments across the country in true partnership. The history of Canada has proved that you cannot solve the socio-economic issues of Indigenous peoples by dictating to them and force-feeding solutions to our communities,” said Saganash.

**“THIS GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO CHANGE ITS APPROACH OF CONFRONTATION AND START TO WORK WITH INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN TRUE PARTNERSHIP. THE HISTORY OF CANADA HAS PROVED THAT YOU CANNOT SOLVE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BY DICTATING TO THEM AND FORCE-FEEDING SOLUTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITIES.”**



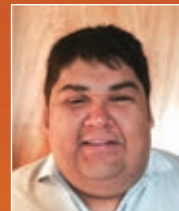
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- MEDIA:** James Bay Cree Communications Society (JBCCS)
- SUBJECTS:** History of Housing, Housing Statistics, Housing conditions, Overcrowding, Housing backlog, Housing demand, Information on Homeownership, Rent-to-own, Importance of rent collection, Preventive maintenance, Renovations, Mold remediation, and many, many more other subjects...

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## Drug busts hit Waskaganish, Mistissini

A crackdown on drug trafficking this month culminated in arrests and seized contraband in two separate communities.

The Eeyou Eenou Police Force (EEPF) executed the most recent bust in Waskaganish on May 19. After months of investigation, the Waskaganish detachment was granted a warrant to search a vehicle and residence in the community. Officers had received allegations that the vehicle in question, a black pickup truck, was being used to transport illegal substances from the south so that they could be sold in the community.

Just before 5 am that day, investigators stopped the truck on km 44 of the Waskaganish access road. Police seized close to 300 grams of a white sub-

stance alleged to be cocaine they said is worth \$70,000, along with drug paraphernalia. Officers apprehended one male and two females between the ages of 27-31. They were released soon after with an August court date.

The operation was the second attack on the drug trade orchestrated by the EEPF in the past month.

On April 23, eight residences in Mistissini were searched as part of a sting dubbed "Project Amisk."

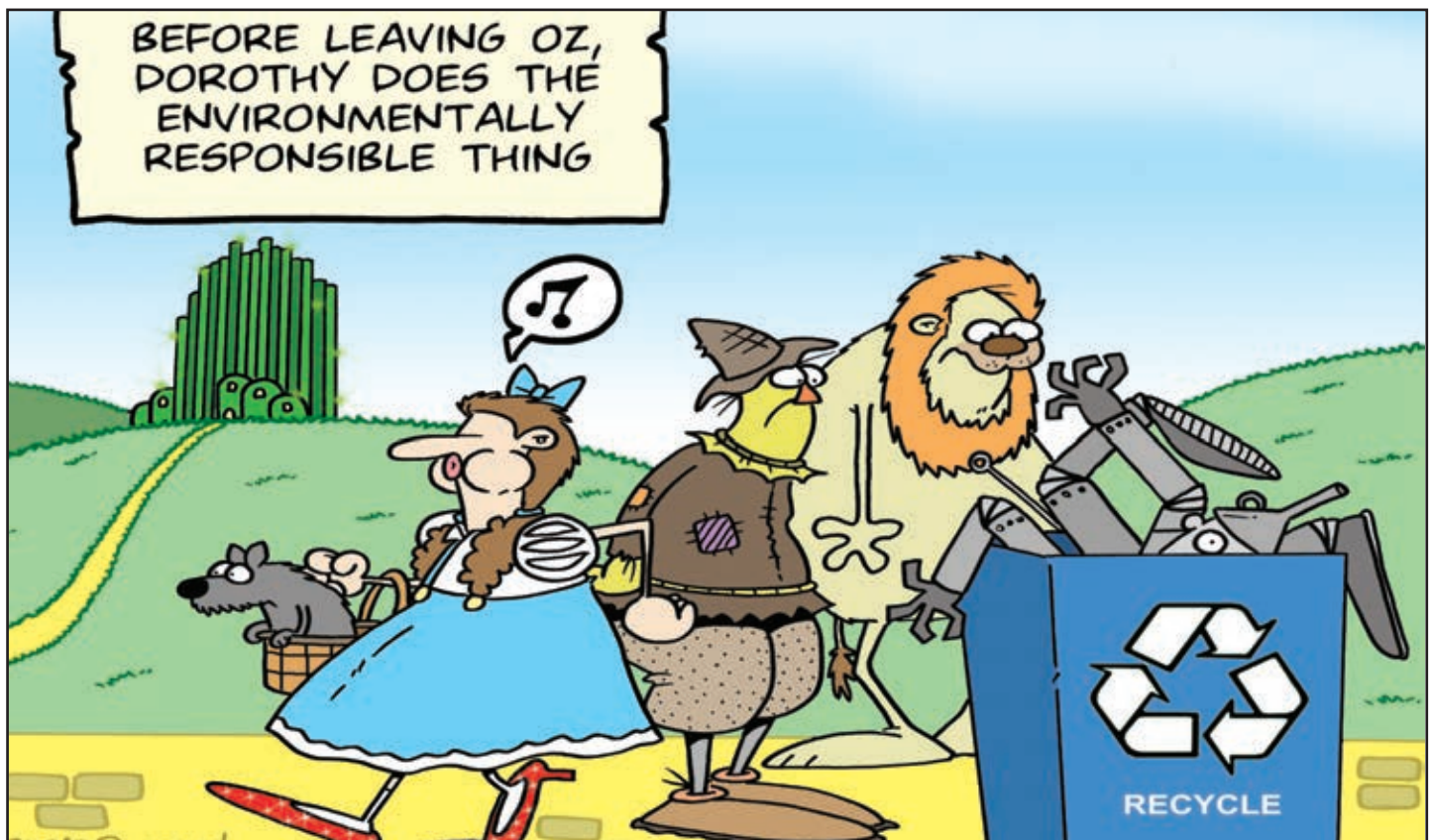
"This investigation was led by the EEPF, who then sought the assistance of the RCMP's Aboriginal Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (A-CFSEU), and the Sûreté du Québec," said EEPF Director Reggie Bobbish. "We worked together for 24 months, collecting intelligence on these traffickers."

Nearly 50 officers descended on the community for the operation, which ended with four arrests. Lina Coonishish, 41, of Mistissini, appeared

in court on May 8 to face charges of drug trafficking and remains in police custody. The other three community members who were arrested were later released, but may face charges at a later date. Cocaine, marijuana, cash and firearms were seized from seven of the residences searched, but officers were unwilling to disclose the amounts taken.

With several details regarding the bust being withheld by police due to ongoing investigation, the outcome of Project Amisk remains cloudy. However, the EEPF was quick to point out the crucial role that community members played in both operations.

"Without the help of the public we would not have reached our goal today," said Bobbish. Amisk was initiated after complaints from the community gave police the information they needed to take action against local dealers.



Cree nominations to the CDC board are a who's who of political and business power in Eeyou Istchee.

## Power struggle heats up

### Tug of war over control of Cree economic assets continues between Creco and Cree Development Corporation

by Lyle Stewart

An ongoing publicity campaign by the Board of Compensation and Creco, in the pages of the *Nation* and elsewhere, has raised the ire of the Grand Council and the Cree Development Corporation just as the CDC is supposed to assume control of the assets of the two powerful entities.

An advertising campaign, website, hardcover book and YouTube video all trumpet Creco's contributions to the economy of Eeyou Istchee since it was established and funded by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement 36 years ago.

However, GCC Executive Director Bill Namagoose charges that much of the campaign is misleading. For instance, he disputes the statement that the Board of Compensation (BOC) and Creco have generated more than \$233 million in wages over the past five years.

"The wages have been paid from funds provided through the Paix des Braves," said Namagoose. "They are taking credit for jobs that the leadership created."

He added, "In their online video, they say they have doubled the worth of their invest-

ments to \$257 million. Well, that fund was established in 1975, and it should be worth more than \$600 million."

Neither did the campaign receive political approval, notes Rodney Hester, Implementation Manager for the CDC. "This should have been brought to the Grand Council for approval," Hester said.

The Grand Council first passed a resolution in February 2011 that called for the phased dissolution of the Board of Compensation and the transfer of CreeCo to the CDC, centralizing Cree economic power in the hands of directors appointed by the Grand Council and the government of Quebec.

The new corporation would also control Cree Construction, Air Creebec and Valpiro, among others. The CDC will also administer funding from the 2002 agreement that established an investment fund worth as much as \$300 million.

The Board of Compensation is resisting the move. A resolution drawn up last February for the BOC to approve the transfer of its shares to the CDC did not make it to the board's agenda. And Namagoose claims that the BOC will not even allow the

subject to be discussed during board meetings.

This and the high-powered publicity campaign to emphasize their economic and social contributions to Cree life suggest that Creco and the BOC intend to continue fighting the takeover by the CDC.

Creco President Darlene Cheechoo didn't return telephone messages seeking comment.

However, Creco board members clearly opposed the centralization of business assets under the CDC during a meeting in January 2012, asking the Grand Council and Cree Regional Authority to preserve institutions that provide a democratic voice for beneficiaries of the JBNQA.

But Namagoose says the elected model is no longer the right one for an economic-development branch managing hundreds of millions of dollars. He said the BOC lost 30% of its value during the stock-market crash of 2008, more than it should have compared to other investment funds.

"They lost \$50 million but no one lost their jobs," Namagoose said. "The danger in electing people is that they are not held



"The danger in electing people is that they are not held accountable. We are rolling the dice when we elect people to manage \$150 million."

— Bill Namagoose



accountable. We are rolling the dice when we elect people to manage \$150 million."

At the time, Jack Blacksmith was president of the Board of Compensation, and opposed the plan. He told the Nation then that the BOC supports economic development, job creation and training, "But you can't do that by giving all our money to CDC, dissolving the Board of Compensation, the Board of CREECO Inc. That's what we don't agree with."

Now, however, Blacksmith is slated to sit on the board of the CDC.

Other Cree nominations to the CDC board are a who's who of political and business power in Eeyou Istchee. They include Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come (who will chair the board), former Grand Chief Ted Moses, Abel Bosum, Blacksmith, Davey Bobbish and Bill Namagoose.

"We have a strong slate of reputable and credible people of high calibre," said Rodney Hester. "They have credibility with the Cree people, and bring added value management skills."

The Quebec government will nominate five members to the board, subject to a Cree

veto. "They will give us access to 'Quebec Inc.,'" said Hester, saying they are looking for connected business leaders to provide an advisory role, industry expertise and to open doors to investors in tourism, forestry and mining.

"This is the key to our success: we will have the power now to make some big decisions," Hester emphasized. "Our Cree board of directors and the capital we are able to pool will create a fund that can respond quickly to opportunities that can help us create employment for our people."

Namagoose suggests the long, ongoing power struggle is at the expense of Crees lacking jobs and housing.

"The people at the BOC all have jobs in their home communities," he said. "I could care less about those people. I care about people sitting at home who don't have jobs. They are the most difficult to help because they have no voice."

"If we don't create jobs then our most talented people will leave. We will suffer from a brain drain. Across Canada, about 50% of people leave their territory. We still have

95% of our people in our communities."

And Namagoose says the CDC is a key part of the evolution of Cree governance since the 1970s.

"The big picture is that after 36 years we have made great efforts to get governments to respond to us in the Paix des Braves," he observed. "We forced them to honour their obligations. We fixed the governance of the territory; we are no longer isolated in Category I lands. We have created the regional government. On January 1 the CRA was changed to the Cree Nation Government. We have now resolved governance over treaty issues. People are coming home to the communities and they are looking for new jobs."

This is a high-stakes debate for the Cree people. The CDC will control the Wyapschinigun Fund (also known as the Heritage Fund) that is expected to be worth up to \$50 billion once all of the funding from the Paix des Braves Agreement is delivered. But it's clear that a power struggle over who controls Eeyou Istchee's economic future continues to rage.

# Nuclear meltdown

## Coon Come opens BAPE consultation on uranium mining

by Jesse Staniforth

With a new, pro-business Liberal government, the beginning of a provincial consultation process on uranium extraction and new legal manoeuvres by Strateco, the battle over uranium mining in Quebec is reaching a tipping point.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come was one of the first to appear before a year-long Bureau d'audiences Publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) consultation on the issue that began in Montreal May 20.

Coon Come explained that the BAPE does not normally have jurisdiction in Eeyou Istchee, but that the Cree Nation recognized the need for a broad and independent inquiry into the uranium sector in Quebec. "Proponent-led project reviews do not tend to provide for an assessment of the true costs and risks of uranium mining," he said.

The true costs, Coon Come said, are in the potential effects on lands and waters, and on plants and animals.

"Our connection with this land and its inhabitants is not something abstract and intangible," he told the Montreal hearing. "It is at the core of our way of life. Much has changed in our communities over the last three generations, but our way of life remains fundamentally connected to the land, [and] relies on the land for all that we have. In turn, we must respect the land for all that it has to offer."

A week before, a press conference by a number of environmental and community organizations called on the recently elected Premier Philippe Couillard to uphold the moratorium on uranium extraction imposed by the former PQ government last year. The coalition, which included Greenpeace, Mining Watch and groups representing communi-

"One thing we have to understand is the BAPE process in large part started from our stand on the most advanced uranium project in Quebec, which is in our backyard," Longchap said. "They have a duty to consult us. It's only natural for a good government to hear the concerns of the people who are most directly affected, especially if their way of

"Our connection with this land and its inhabitants is not something abstract and intangible. It is at the core of our way of life."



Matthew Coon Come at the BAPE hearing in Montreal

ties, physicians and academics, also emphasized the need to respect Aboriginal positions over mining in their territories.

John Longchap, Director General of the Cree Nation of Mistissini, and Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Ghislain Picard chaired the meeting.

life and the territory that they've subsisted upon for many years is going to be affected."

Picard agreed, saying the position of the Grand Council of the Crees has guided the AFN's Quebec Chiefs in their position on uranium.





Ghislain Picard and John Longchap (centre) speak with environmental and community organizers.

"They have adopted a very strongly worded resolution just over a year ago, saying that this is 'a global rejection of any kind of uranium exploration on our lands.' That's where our Chiefs in Quebec stand on this issue, and they will continue defending that position," Picard explained.

To Picard, even calls for a permanent moratorium on uranium fell too short.

"A moratorium could mean that we look at the issue again in 10 or 20 years," he said. "We're not too confident about that. So that's why we want to make it clear that any type of exploration of uranium on our lands is definitely out of the question."

Should the battle continue, however, Picard says he is ready to see uranium become a central piece of the argument about Aboriginal territorial sovereignty. "The whole issue of land, and the rights and title to the land, is something that nobody else can claim but our peoples."

As the Grand Chief told the BAPE hearing, the people most at risk need to be heard.

Supporters of the Strateco Resources' Matoush project north of Mistissini have consistently played down the possibility of negative effects, said Coon Come.

Coon Come pointed to the lifespan of radioactive waste, which must be contained for thousands of years. He said a report prepared for the Environment Ministry glossed over the complexity of that issue, which would require creative organizational, institutional and funding structures to communicate and contain the risk down hundreds of generations.

"The mining and milling of these deposits will happen on our territory," he said. "The yellowcake will be transported down our roads, through our territory. The tailings will be left behind on our land. Our surface water and groundwater will bear the risk of contamination. The animals and plant life on which we rely for sustenance and nourishment drink this water. We, the Crees of Eeyou Istchee,

drink this water. We are the ones who will bear the brunt of any health risks associated with contamination."

The James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement, he reminded the BAPE, is a constitutional treaty, which takes precedence over legislation, and makes Eeyou Istchee "subject to a unique environmental and social protection regime."

For that reason, said Coon Come, the social acceptability of the project must be especially strongly considered by the BAPE.

"The concerns and opinions of the population directly affected by uranium mining must be at the core of any decision regarding the uranium sector," he said. "Social acceptability cannot be treated as an afterthought. The views of the people who live near the uranium deposits, the people who must bear the real risks, must be at the forefront of your work over the next year. This is essential, even when this work occurs in Montreal or Quebec City."

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Eeyou Istchee James Bay  
Regional Government

*The New*  
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REGIONAL GOVERNMENT**  
*and*  
**CREE NATION GOVERNMENT**



**What is it all about?**



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Cree Nation Government  
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

## Government?

The **CREE NATION GOVERNMENT** is the new name for the Cree Regional Authority. This new name reflects the new powers and authorities we now exercise on Category I and II lands as a result of our agreements with Quebec (“Paix des Braves”, 2002 and *Governance Agreement, 2012*).

The **REGIONAL GOVERNMENT** is the new entity which exercises certain planning and management powers over Category III lands. The *Governance Agreement* called for this Regional Government to be created. This new entity is comprised of both Cree and Jamésien representatives. This new Regional Government replaces the old MBJ (Municipalité de la Baie James) which has been abolished.

The Cree people retain all the rights they have on Category III lands including those which are described in the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. These rights are our treaty rights and they have not been altered or diminished in any way with the creation of the Regional Government. The Grand Council of the Crees remains as the primary Cree entity mandated with the responsibility of ensuring the protection of Cree rights.

## Government?

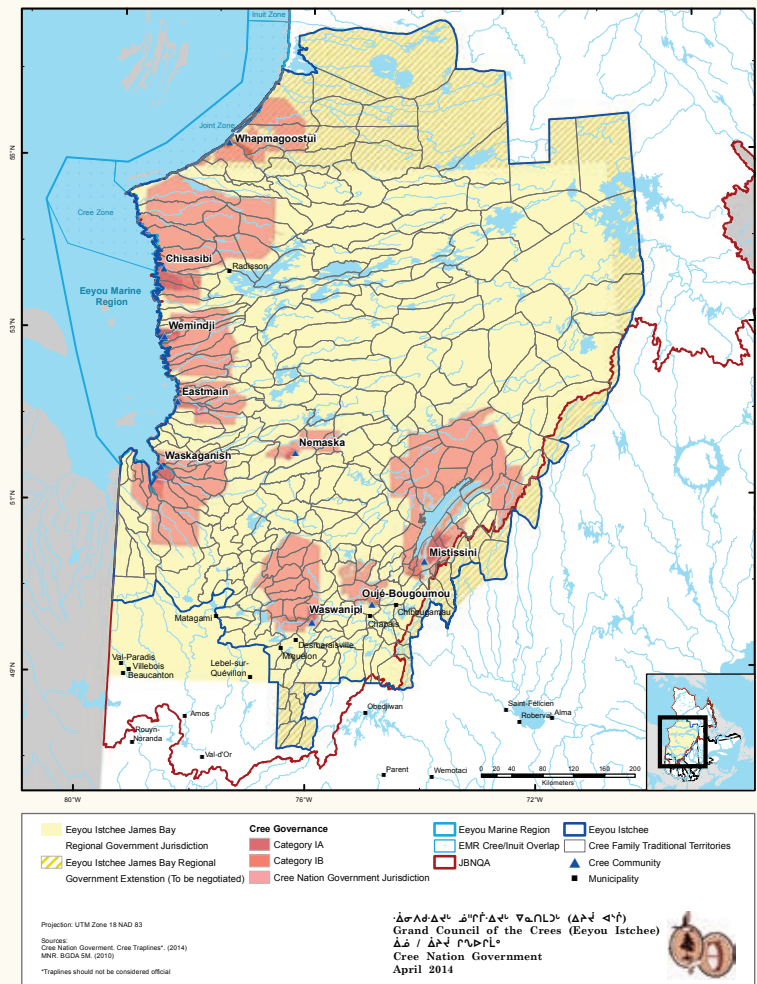
No. All the rights exercised by the Cree Nation, communities and individuals are the same as they were before. The rights of the Crees under our treaty, the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, have not in any way been diminished. In fact, because of our increased role in the territory, both on Category II lands and Category III lands, our rights have been enhanced.

**now?**

With the implementation of the Governance Agreement, the Crees now have new powers over Category II lands in the planning and management of land and resource use and economic development planning. When the Governance Agreement is fully implemented, the Crees will have jurisdiction on both Category I and II lands, that is, over a territory of approximately 75,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

Through the Regional Government, we will also be able to share in the exercise of these new powers over Category III lands together with our Jamésien neighbours, over a territory of approximately 277,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

## Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory - Cree Family Traditional Territories



*The Inauguration of the new Eeyou Istchee James Bay  
Regional Government*



*"Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory Between The Crees of Eeyou Istchee And the Gouvernement du Québec" July 24, 2012*

## What is it? 🇩🇪

On July 24, 2012 the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee signed an historic agreement with the Government of Quebec. This agreement is called: "Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory Between The Crees of Eeyou Istchee And the Gouvernement du Québec". This Agreement called for the creation of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government.

It has long been a vision of the Cree Nation to have greater control over what happens in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee. To have this greater control we need to have a major role regarding a number of planning and management powers in the Territory. It is through these planning and management powers that control of the Territory is exercised.

## How are the Crees represented on the new Regional Government? 🇩🇪

The new Regional Government will be directed by a Council composed of 11 Cree representatives and 11 Jamésien representatives. On the Cree side, the Cree representatives will be made up of the Chair of the Cree Nation Government as well as 10 individuals designated by the Council of the Cree Nation Government from among the elected Council members. In fact, the Cree Nation Government has designated the Deputy Grand Chief and the Chiefs of the Cree First Nations as the Cree representatives on the Council of the Regional Government.

The Chair of the Regional Government will alternate every two years between the Crees and the Jamésiens. For the first two years, the Chair will be Mayor Manon Cyr of Chibougamau and Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come will be the Vice-Chair.

## What language will be used in the new Regional Government? 🇩🇪

The employees of the new Regional Government will be able to work in either English or French. Anyone in the region may communicate with the Regional Government either in Cree, English or French.

## Will the Crees now be taxed by the new Regional Government? 🇩🇪

The Cree exemption from taxation on Category 1A land, as described in the *James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement* and the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, remains in place.

For Category II lands, it was agreed in our Governance Agreement that these powers would be taken away from MBJ and be given to the Cree Nation Government. The Cree Nation Government will have these new powers over Category II lands, and a new Regional Government, in which the Cree Nation will play a major role, together with the non-Native municipalities in the region, will have these powers over Category III lands.

The Governance Agreement is about the Cree Nation taking a central role in the way in which decisions are made about what happens in Eeyou Istchee, both on Category II lands and Category III lands. The Cree Nation, through our own Cree governments, will have greater control over what happens on Category II lands, and together with our neighbours, on Category III lands.

This Agreement is a further step in protecting the Cree Way of Life, and also, it is about ensuring our involvement in the development of resources within Eeyou Istchee.

## Why was it created? 🇩🇪

In 2001, the Quebec Government passed a law that changed the James Bay Municipality (MBJ) in a way that excluded the Crees from the governance of our own traditional territory. This was unacceptable to the Cree Nation. The Governance Agreement corrected this serious problem by ensuring that the Crees would be included in the governance of the territory, both on Category II lands and Category III lands.

Our Governance Agreement, and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government which comes from that Agreement, modernizes and changes parts of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* which deal with regional governments. MBJ has been abolished.





Eeyou Istchee James Bay  
Regional Government



*“With the new Regional Government, we are turning the page on the old politics of exclusion, and embarking on a new partnership in governance between the Cree and Jamésiens. The Regional Government gives life to the original vision in the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement of 1975 of a partnership in governance of the Territory. We are building something never before seen in Québec.”*

Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come



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# Forestry face-off

## A logging corporation at war over loss of coveted FSC certifications

by Amy German

In today's forest industry, a certification from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is worth money, big money.

Created in 1993 to allow companies and the public to identify products coming from responsibly managed forests, the FSC provides a trusted seal of approval that commands higher market prices for producers.

Resolute Forest Products is the world's largest FSC-certified forest company. But increasingly, the Montreal-based forestry giant once known as Abitibi-Bowater is losing important FSC certifications over questionable logging practices in Quebec and Ontario.

The company is fighting back. On May 20, Resolute went to court to prevent the release of a negative audit of its practices near Thunder Bay, Ontario, which could result in the loss of a FSC certification. Last year, Resolute filed a \$7 million lawsuit against Greenpeace for an ongoing campaign to revoke a FSC certificate for logging practices that it says damaged woodland Caribou habitat in Quebec.

The move to suppress damaging information is familiar to the Grand Council of the Crees.

A year ago, the Grand Council filed a complaint over the granting of a FSC certification for a Resolute forest management plan that affected Cree traplines in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region – despite the company's refusal to

consult the Grand Council. Aboriginal consent is a key component of the certification process.

In December, the global oversight body called Accreditation Services International (ASI) ruled that the auditor, the Rainforest Alliance, should not have recommended this FSC certificate. The Rainforest Alliance is one of the

was nowhere to be found. Resolute's penchant for launching lawsuits could be one reason for the hesitation. Greenpeace Quebec says that Resolute engages in abusive legal actions called SLAPP suits (strategic lawsuit against public participation) intended to silence its critics.

ASI Compliance Coordinator Angeline Robertson confirmed

Last year, Resolute filed a \$7 million lawsuit against Greenpeace for an ongoing campaign to revoke a FSC certificate for logging practices that it says damaged woodland Caribou habitat in Quebec.

main FSC certificate auditing agencies, but is now, ironically, also the target of the Resolute Forest Products' lawsuit filed in Ontario Superior Court last week.

This a complicated story, made murkier still by money and the legal power it can buy. While the Grand Council received the original ASI report before Christmas, it was told to keep it private until it was officially released. As the months stretched on into this spring without any action by the agencies involved, however, the Grand Council started sharing the report with selected stakeholders.

That prompted ASI to finally release a public version of the report in April, a version in which the name of the company involved

that Resolute requested that its name be expunged from the final report over confidentiality concerns of its logging plans.

"The FME (forest management enterprise) in this case requested to have their name removed from this public summary," Robertson told the Nation via email from Germany. "All of the aforementioned organizations are allowed to make requests for omissions to the public summary and all of them are aware of the omissions that have been allowed by ASI prior to the release of that document."

According to GCC Senior Environmental Analyst Jeff Quaille, the process is tainted by its lack of transparency. "Those that err



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should not have the power to basically cover this thing up,” said Quaille.

Despite this, Quaille said that he chose to pursue this issue to ensure that the rights of First Nations remain protected in this process.

“I believe it will ensure that future certifications (companies and auditors) will not take principle 3 and Indigenous ‘Prior, Free and Informed Consent’ for granted. For the Crees it will ensure that all other certifications in Eeyou Istchee are treated in similar fashion,” said Quaille.

Last year, he explained, the Grand Council had requested that Resolute share its data to show how they had been complying with an accord with the Cree known as the Baril-Moses Agreement. But Resolute reacted by immediately ceasing all communication with the Cree.

The Grand Council then contacted the Rainforest Alliance to understand why Resolute was being granted the certification.

“We made this known to Rainforest Alliance who was undergoing the audit at the time that we thought that there was a big problem and that we needed to find out from either the company or the government exactly what had been going on,” said Quaille. “We argued that it doesn’t seem fair.”

When Rainforest Alliance finally did hand over the data, it was clear that the Baril-Moses Agreement had been breached; Quaille said the Grand Council then requested an opportunity to participate in the audit process but was told by

Rainforest Alliance it was too late, they had made their ruling and Resolute would get the certification.

The Accreditation Services International audit concluded the certification should not have been granted over Cree objections.

Greenpeace Quebec Director Nicolas Mainville, who is responsible for Greenpeace’s Forestry Campaign, said he is hopeful that some change can come about as a result.

“Resolute lost its FSC certificates in part because of its disregard for the right of First Nations for prior and informed consent about forestry activity. Now this multibillion-dollar corporation is trying to control information and use aggressive advertising campaigns and a meritless lawsuit to hide from their responsibilities. Instead of investing in marketing to try and convince people they’ve done nothing wrong, Resolute should be doing everything possible to get their certificates back, including getting consent from the Cree.”

Rainforest Alliance did not respond to our interview requests.

“When all things are said and done, we don’t have an issue with the final decision,” said Quaille. “They agreed with us and the work was really good and professional. What I would criticize is ASI’s rules for disclosure and transparency. Giving the power to those that make the mistakes to block or remove themselves from the record is unfair and it is not a transparent process.”

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# Spring Goose Hunt

photos by Amanda Mckenzie, Joshua Iserhoff and Will Nicholls







The seasons are changing and this has never been so evident in Eeyou Istchee. One person said the winter held back the spring Goose Break hunt by almost a month. May 21 saw Sonny Orr getting his first goose in Whapmagoostui although the large flocks had yet to arrive that far north. In Mistissini, the geese were just starting to arrive by May 5. Hunters heard that many were still down south.

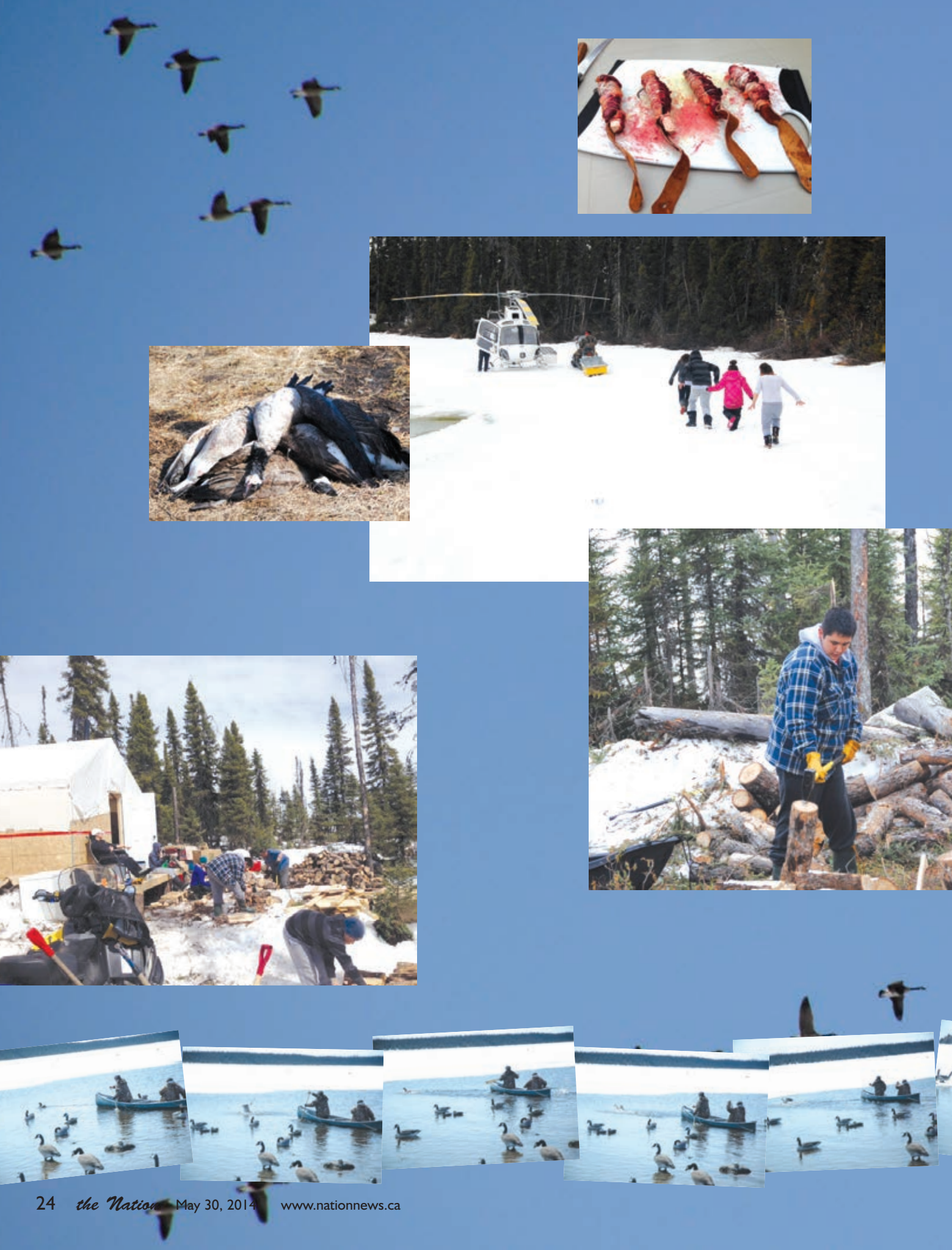
It didn't deter folks from heading out to welcome them back. I hope people will send in their community's recognition and pride in who killed the first goose in their hometown. At the *Nation* we like to acknowledge these hunters as well as the youth who got their first goose ever.

You can phone us at 514 272-3077 or email [nation@nationnews.ca](mailto:nation@nationnews.ca).

In the meantime, here are a few photos of this year's goose hunt. If you would like to share your Goose Break photos go to: [www.nationnews.ca/contact-us/story-or-photo-to-share](http://www.nationnews.ca/contact-us/story-or-photo-to-share)











# Recipes from the Emerald Isle

## A goose and a rabbit recipe for your spring table

by Amy German



While Irish cuisine may not be familiar to people in northern Quebec, it is entirely possible to take inspiration from the majestic land of shamrocks and sheleighlys.

Paging through *The Country Cooking of Ireland*, Colman Andrews' 2009 cookbook, is to bear witness to Ireland's beauty and bounty thanks to the breathtaking photographs of Christopher Hirshheimer. Besides highlighting Ireland's culinary diversity, the book illuminates the history of these dishes and the people who make them.

A James Beard Foundation cookbook of the year, this stunningly gorgeous book shouldn't only be thumbed each year for St. Patrick's Day as it includes numerous recipes for everything from pork to venison to poultry and easy-to-prepare but delicious plans for vegetable side dishes.

This cookbook is a celebration of and a guide to making gorgeous fish, fine potatoes, divine carrots, beautiful breads and delightful cakes.

Here are two recipes from the book that can be used to celebrate the wild meats and game of Eeyou Istchee, blending traditional cultures and flavours.

### Michaelmas Goose

Serves 8

Goose is so firmly associated with Michaelmas (September 29) in Ireland that the old Irish name for the holiday was Fómhar na nGéanna (the goose harvest). There are countless variations on the stuffing, but they usually involve apples and potatoes.

1 9-to-11-lb (4½-to-5½-kg) goose, with giblets, completely thawed if frozen

3 onions, chopped  
1 carrot, chopped  
1 stalk celery, chopped  
bouquet garni (2 sprigs parsley, 2 sprigs thyme, and 1 bay leaf, wrapped and tied in cheesecloth)  
4 slices bacon, minced  
2 tbsp butter  
3 cooking apples, peeled, cored, and chopped  
4 cups/850 g freshly made mashed potatoes  
1 tbsp chopped fresh sage

1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme  
1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley  
salt and pepper  
applesauce for serving

Separate the liver from the giblets and set aside. Put the heart, neck and gizzard in a medium pan. Add a third of the onion, the carrot, celery and bouquet garni, then add enough water to cover all the ingredients. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for two hours.



Fry the bacon over medium heat in a large skillet with a lid (do not cover) until brown, then remove with a slotted spoon and set aside. Lower the heat, add the butter to the bacon fat, and when it has melted, add the remaining onions. Cook, stirring frequently, for 10 to 12 minutes, or until they soften.

Finely chop the reserved goose liver, then add to the onions. Cook for three to four minutes, then add the apples to the skillet. Cover the skillet and cook for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the apples have broken down and are very soft. Stir in the mashed potatoes, sage, thyme and parsley, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C (Gas Mark 6).

Wash and dry the goose thoroughly inside and out. Pull out any fat inside the cavity and reserve it to render later for cooking fat. Prick the skin of the goose all over with a fork, then rub salt all over the skin. Season the cavity with salt and pepper, then fill with the stuffing. Truss the goose with kitchen twine, binding the legs and wings close to its body.

Put the goose in a heavy roasting pan large enough to hold it, with a little room around the sides, and roast it for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and draw off the rendered fat with a bulb baster or large spoon. (Reserve the fat for cooking.)

Return the pan to the oven and decrease the temperature to 325°F/160°C (Gas Mark 3).

Roast for about 2½ hours more, drawing off rendered fat at least once more as it cooks. Test for doneness by pricking the thigh at its thickest point with a skewer. If the juices run clear, the goose is done; if they're pink, roast for another 15 minutes, then check again.

Meanwhile, strain the giblet stock, discarding the solids, and set aside.

When the goose is done, transfer it to a large serving platter to rest. Draw off any remaining fat, then set the roasting pan over two burners on the stovetop. Deglaze with the stock, scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Strain the gravy into a gravy boat or bowl.

Carve the goose at the table. Serve with applesauce and the gravy.

## Stuffed Rabbit Armagh Style

Serves 4

I don't know the origins of this recipe, in which the rabbit is stuffed and pot-roasted, or even whether it is really typical of Armagh, but it appears in Mary Caherty's book, *Real Irish Cookery* (1987), and has been widely appropriated in other recipe collections.

4 tbsp butter  
1 onion, chopped  
2 cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped  
1 cup/60 g fresh bread crumbs  
1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley  
1 tsp chopped fresh thyme  
1 tsp sugar  
1 egg, beaten  
1 3-to-4-lb (1½-to-2-kg) whole rabbit (completely thawed

if frozen), washed and dried inside and out

1½ cups/360 ml chicken or rabbit stock

salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F/175°C (Gas Mark 4).

Melt two tbsp of the butter in a medium skillet over medium-low heat, add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes. Add the apples and continue cooking for 10 to 15 minutes more, or until the apples are very soft.

Put the onion-apple mixture into a large bowl, then stir in the bread crumbs, parsley, thyme, sugar and egg. Season the mixture generously with salt and pepper.

Melt the remaining two tbsp of butter in the same skillet over

medium-high heat, then add the stuffing and cook for three to four minutes, stirring constantly. Set aside to cool.

When the stuffing is cool enough to handle, pack it loosely into the cavity of the rabbit. Put the rabbit into a baking dish and spoon any leftover stuffing around it. Pour the stock over the rabbit, cover the dish loosely with foil, and bake for 1½ hours. Remove the foil and bake for another 20 to 30 minutes, or until the rabbit is very tender and most of the stock has evaporated.

To serve, cut the rabbit into serving pieces with poultry shears. Put the stuffing in the middle of a serving dish and arrange the rabbit over it.



## Preparing for the worst

### Learning from past disasters

Are you and your family ready for when disaster strikes? Do you have an emergency plan and kits ready? What if the roads into your community are closed? Would you have enough supplies in your home to last until they reopen?

Whether it's a flood or a forest fire, Eeyou Istchee's communities can sometimes be subject to evacuations or declared states of emergency.

While all the Cree communities already have emergency plans in place, each family needs to make sure it has what it needs in case disaster strikes.

Jason Coonishish has been the Coordinator of Pre-hospital and Emergency Measures Planning at the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) since the H1N1 flu pandemic of 2009. Since then he has seen several evacuations small and large.

With the forest-fire season is looming, Coonishish says now is a good time to stockpile necessary essentials. There are other scenarios that could see communities partially evacuated. These include the threat of excessive smoke and damage from forest fires, power failures, water shortages, road closures due to floods and landslides, and heavy winds.

On the Ontario side of Cree territory, there have just been major evacuations of entire communities – Kashechewan and Attawapiskat – due to major flooding. But there doesn't need to be a large-scale disaster for people to be evacuated.

Even a low water level can lead to patients being evacuated, as in Chisasibi where there are patients receiving dialysis.

"We have nine dialysis machines in Chisasibi and that means we treat nine people at a time, with two sessions per day. When we have a water shortage due to a freeze-up, sometimes the water level will drop really low and this can affect those on dialysis. When this happens we have to move them out really quickly," said Coonishish.

This happened a few years ago, and 18 patients and their escorts had to be sent to Montreal.

But, the most common reason for an evacuation of a community in Eeyou Istchee is fire, most recently last summer in Eastmain where over 350 people had to be flown out.

"Now is a good time to examine emergency packs to make sure that they all include weather-appropriate clothing and checking the expiry dates on the non-perishable food items."

"We already have lists established in each community for who is most vulnerable," he explained. "It goes by phase 1, phase 2 and then a phase 3, the rest of the community. Everyone who is sick is evacuated out with an escort and that is why in Eastmain it was over 350 because of all of the escorts. Last year, we only got up to phase 2 of the evacuation plans but we did not have to get up to phase 3 because the wind changed direction and this helped us a lot."

Those on the phase 1 list for an evacuation are all long-term chronic-care patients and this includes Elders and those in Elders homes, those suffering from repertory illnesses like asthma and pulmonary fibrosis, cardiac patients, infants (newborns aged one month and under) along with their complete families, prenatal patients (women over 36 weeks along) with an escort and those with high-risk pregnancies, the handicapped, mental-



health clients and pre-hemodialysis and dialysis patients as well as special-needs children.

Phase 2 evacuees include all prenatal patients (who are 35 weeks or less), the rest of the infants (who are 12 months or less) and their families and all Elders who are over 65 but without health conditions.

The phase 3 includes everyone else.

Once an emergency is declared however, it is up to the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs to handle a full-scale evacuation, as it has done for the two Ontario communities this May. Aboriginal Affairs provides plans and procedures for a full-scale evacuation and foots the bill.

According to Coonishish, with summer right around the corner, now is a good time to examine emergency packs to make sure that they all include weather-appropriate clothing and checking the expiry dates on the non-perishable food items.

For those who are sick or on a higher vulnerability list, checking what you would need for your care is very important.

"What we tell people who are vulnerable is to pack their medication, make sure that they have

their health card, toiletries, clothing to last a few days, chargers for cellphones and follow the instructions from the First Nations Emergency Department," said Coonishish.

Everyone in the communities should at all times have everything necessary to create a complete 72-hour emergency preparedness kit to ensure the health and safety of their family in the event of a disaster.

According to the federal government's Get Prepared website ([www.getprepared.gc.ca](http://www.getprepared.gc.ca)), every 72-hour preparedness kit should include the following:

- 1) Two litres of water per person per day (include small bottles that can be carried easily in case of an evacuation order);
- 2) Food that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (remember to replace the food and water once a year);
- 3) Manual can opener;
- 4) Flashlight and batteries;
- 5) Battery-powered or wind-up radio;
- 6) Extra batteries;
- 7) First aid kit;
- 8) Prescription medications, infant formula or equipment for people with disabilities;
- 9) Extra keys for your car and house;
- 10) Smaller bills, such as \$10 bills and change for payphones;
- 11) An emergency plan that includes all your in-town and out-of-town contact information.

Coonishish said residents need to have in their homes enough supplies to sustain their families for two weeks at all times. Last summer's crisis saw the closure of several restaurants and gasoline shortages.

For more about what to do in the event of a forest fire: [www.creehealth.org](http://www.creehealth.org)



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## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

### In honour of mechanics

by Xavier Kataquapit

I am not much of a mechanic but I am handy enough to be able to do basic maintenance on my truck and motorcycle. Like most guys I know from remote First Nation communities, I am more or less like the saying goes, a jack-of-all-trades and master of none.

When you live in a remote area where there are no service centres it is necessary to learn enough to get by in order to maintain any vehicles you might own. To a degree, that knowledge is passed down by fathers, uncles and friends. Most mechanical know-how usually comes from outside professionals who find their way into the community to work on projects. Sometimes these mechanics settle in a remote First Nation community for a while and work for the band council public works department to maintain mechanical equipment. At times some of these professionals start up their own businesses.

Mechanics and technical professionals are highly valued in remote First Nations. More often than not their expertise is drawn upon for all kinds of work. Local people become associated with these pros and learn merely through watching and asking questions.

Vehicles and equipment need a lot of maintenance in remote northern First Nations. There are few local roads but those that exist are often very rough. You rarely see a car or van in the far north on a First Nation simply because they are not built strong enough to deal with extreme driving conditions. Trucks are prominent. To complicate matters the temperatures

dip to minus-40 Celsius in the winter in many northern communities and that can be hard on mechanical machines. For a good part of the year vehicles are driven on winter roads that can be rough and pose challenges when the spring thaw arrives.

I can remember driving tractors and trucks on the winter road during a warm spell. The surface of the road was like an obstacle course with ice and water on the way. At times there would be sections where the ice road had softened and the muskeg posed big problems in that vehicles would get stuck. I can recall seeing trucks abandoned on the winter road due to the fact that drivers simply could not get their vehicle back on solid ground. Muskeg is like black quicksand mostly composed of water. These days the winter roads are more substantial in many parts of the north country, but they still pose a challenge.

If you end up on a winter road and you get stuck or your vehicle develops a problem, you had better have some knowledge of how to cope with being alone out in the middle of nowhere in freezing weather with no opportunity to simply call a tow truck or CAA. Necessity demands that if you are going to drive any type of vehicle in remote First Nation communities you have to learn how to deal with a mechanical problem on your own with little resources to do the job.

Most snowmobile riders who head out onto the land in the north have some knowledge of how to deal with engine problems. The same goes for

those who travel on the rivers and the great James Bay by boat. First Nation hunters and gatherers who head out on the land can fix just about any mechanical problem when an emergency arises.

By the time I was a teenager I knew how to perform basic servicing of trucks, four-wheeled ATVs and snowmobiles. I was driving from the age of 12 and as a teenager I drove trucks and tractors along the winter road with my taped music blaring so that I could stay awake on the 10-hour ride.

I have great respect for talented mechanics and I have known many of them over the years. Even my dad Marius was a self-taught mechanic who knew a lot about motors. I also recall real mechanical pros like Willie Dubien and his brother Gilles, Bill Grenier, Norman Lascelle and his dad Gaston, Jeff Madden and Jamie St. Onge. They were all from northern Ontario.

My cousin Robert Kataquapit is a legendary self-taught mechanic in Attawapiskat, a magician who can tear apart, rebuild and get just about any motor running again.

More recently I have become acquainted with great southern Ontario mechanics like Kerry and Ryan Marvin of Marvin Tire in St. Williams, and Claude Lord, near Amos. These guys are at home in their garages surrounded by a hodgepodge of tools, nuts, bolts, spare parts, solutions of all types and the smell of oil and gas. I respect every one of these people for their knowledge, honesty and work ethic. They are the salt of the earth.



# MINOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION 10<sup>th</sup> Annual **Golf** benefit 2014

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## June 2014 to March 2015

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